



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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IM Finance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana (IM) Finance Committee met Monday, Sept. 8 in Helena and reviewed the first award letter that the IM Project has sent out. It was to Roosevelt County for a generator at Scout Hill. Progress is being made on documenting accounting processes, and eventually each Project Director will have his or her own notebook of accounting procedures.

An award letter to Fergus County was approved for combiners at the Judith Peak site. Positive movement is being made on sending out an IFB (Invitation For Bid) to procure services for performing NEPAs. Another procurement is being prepared to obtain services for performing soil surveys.

The committee reviewed revisions to the IM Policy on Fiscal and Financial Responsibilities. This item will be placed on the IMPD's agenda for approval in Oct. Dan Sullivan provided background information on the DHS 07 and PSIC Sub-Grantee Status to the IM. The request to extend our FY05 Homeland Security grant through Dec. of 2009 was sent to the Dept. of Homeland Security last Friday.

Damage at Pat's Knob has been repaired. A replacement ice bridge was available, and Harris-Stratex installed it. Sanders County removed the damaged fence because it wasn't needed.

Irene Bushnell, Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), said that work is needed on the inventory process. Scott, Bill and Dan Sullivan were named to work on that process. Bob McWilliams said that the issue of insurance also needs to be addressed.

The next Finance Committee regular meeting is set for Monday, Oct. 6 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. A special work session will be called if necessary.

IM Governance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana (IM) Governance Committee met in Helena on Monday, Sept. 8. The group heard several sub-committee reports and discussed ideas for the fleetmapping work session. During that process, a new sub-committee was established for training, and SCMIC Project Director Kerry O'Connell was named as its chair. Plans are to use the METNET teleconferencing capabilities to deliver training and reduce travel time for participants. Each IM Project Director will be asked to identify two trainers for their region who would participate in an initial "train-the-trainer" session before the end of this year.

A half-day Sustainability Plan work session has been scheduled for the afternoon of Wed., Oct. 1, and telecommunication facilities will be available for persons interested in participating from across the state. IM Governance Committee members and others are asked

to e-mail Bill Fleiner of their interest in participating (wfleiner@mt.gov).

Meetings are taking place to clarify items related to the BNSF Railway contract and to perform long-range planning. Flathead County has been named as the Big Mountain site manager. A follow-up BNSF meeting is planned for Sept. 16. The Montana Association of Counties (MACo) annual conference is taking place Sept. 21-25 in Hamilton. IMPD 1st Vice Chair Joe Brenneman will be speaking about the IM Project at 10:30 am on Wed and a booth will be staffed with IM Project Directors during the conference.

Another sub-committee was named during the meeting: the Contract Management Sub-Committee, and members include Scott Bradford, Kevin Bruski, Glacier County Sheriff Wayne Dusterhoff, Bill Fleiner, Bob McWilliams, Chief Alan Michaels, Roger Smith, and Butte-Silver Bow Sheriff John Walsh. The group will manage loose ends and ensure that all contracts are appropriately closed out and vendors paid.

Members met with MACo representatives Harold Blatte and Sheryl Wood and reviewed an office layout plan, discussed lease agreement details, and examined costs. Members recommended a one-year lease for two office spaces and a storage area, with perhaps a start date as early as Oct. 1.

Wing Spooner reported on an Annual Review of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) by the Dept. of Homeland Security. PSSB staff members wrote required updates to the SCIP Implementation Report, and the committee formally accepted those updates.

The next IM Governance Committee meeting will be a Sustainability Plan work session scheduled at 1:00 pm on Wed., Oct. 1 at the DOC Annex Building, located behind 515 N. Sanders St. in Helena. The next formal meeting is on Mon., Oct. 6 at 12:30 at the same location.

IM Project Directors Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) met Tues., Sept. 9 in Helena. Chief Alan Michaels, IMPD Chair, began with a report on recent Executive Committee decision making. The Executive Committee approved a transfer from the Northrop Grumman contract from the Northern Tier to the IMPD. Also, the committee signed off on a grant extension request and signed an award letter for a generator at Scout Hill for Roosevelt County. In addition, the contract extension with Northrop Grumman was signed.

Dave Hinds, U.S. Air Force (USAF) presented an update on progress on the partnership, and explained some technical details of lease arrangements. Sheriff John Walsh reported on the IM Finance Committee meeting on Sept. 8 and said that a formal request to



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extend FY05 Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) grant funds through Dec. of 2009 was sent last Friday. An Invitation to Bid is being released to procure services for performing NEPAs. DES award letters were approved for the IM Project to be named as the sub-grantee for DHS FY07 funds as well as the Public Safety Interoperability Communications (PSIC) grant. The IMPD also approved new contracts with Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ) for accounting, Jackson, Murdo & Grant for legal services and Communications Management Services (CMS) for personnel consulting.

Irene Bushnell, AZ, provided an update on accounting processes and reported that the bank account is now open with Valley Bank. Quick Books will be used as the accounting software, and plans are to pay bills on a weekly basis.

The IMPD conducted an extensive review of the Hill County proposal to hire an Public Safety Communications System Manager for the eastern portion of the Northern Tier. The proposal was tabled to allow more time for an endorsement from the Northern Tier consortium and to obtain additional input from other consortium members.

Members heard reports from the Statement of Work Committee, the IM Technical Committee (IMTC), the group preparing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for long-term maintenance with the Montana Highway Patrol, and the Frequency and Network Design Sub-Committees. Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, reported on progress along the Northern Tier. Testing is scheduled for late Oct and will be signed off on in January, 2009.

The next IMPD meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 7 at 9:00 at the State Capitol.

Northern Tier Interoperability Consortium

By Pete Mohan pmohan@mt.gov

The Northern Tier Interoperability Consortium (NTIC) met via teleconference on Thurs., Sept. 10. Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, provided an update to the group on the progress of Northern Tier interoperability sites. Currently a large percentage of sites are capable of going live and the rest are cold installed awaiting final work. Progress on frequency approvals, fleet mapping, and best business practices was discussed.

The group also discussed the proposal by Hill County Sheriff Don Brostrom to fund a system manager for the eastern portion of the consortium. More discussion is needed between Project Director Wayne Dusterhoff and interested parties to reach consensus for a Northern Tier proposal to be submitted to the IMPD.

The next meeting of the NTIC is scheduled for 9:00 am, Thurs., Oct. 2 at the Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St. in Havre.

IM Executive Director Position Update

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The IM Project Directors interviewed three candidates for the Interoperability Montana (IM) Executive Director position on Tuesday, Sept. 9. After considerable deliberations during a closed session, an offer of employment was extended to one of the applicants. However, a formal announcement will not be made until the terms of the employment contract are negotiated. We'll keep you posted on the outcome in the *Heard Across Montana* (HAM) newsletter.

Upcoming Meetings

Sept. 16

Western Consortium (WICC)
Missoula • 10:00 am • Missoula County Courthouse
200 W. Broadway (basement)

Sept. 17

South Central Consortium (SCMIC)
Ennis • 10:00 am • First Madison Valley Bank, 213 E Main

Sept. 18

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am • Chamber of Commerce; 1000 George St.

Sept. 21-15

Montana Association of Counties (MACo) Annual Conference
Hamilton • <http://maco.cog.mt.us/>
Be sure to stop by the IM Booth!

Sept. 22

IM Technical Committee (IMTC)
Helena • 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
State Capitol, Room 172

Sept. 24

Tri-County Consortium
Helena • 10:00 am – 12:00 noon
Dept. of Corrections Annex, behind 515 N. Sanders St.

Sept. 29

Mobile Data Consortium (MDT)
Bozeman • 10:00 am – 12:00 noon
Best Western City Center Motel, 507 W Main St.

Oct. 1

IM Governance Committee – Sustainability Plan Work
Session
Helena • 1:00 – 5:00 pm
Dept. of Corrections Annex, behind 515 N. Sanders St.